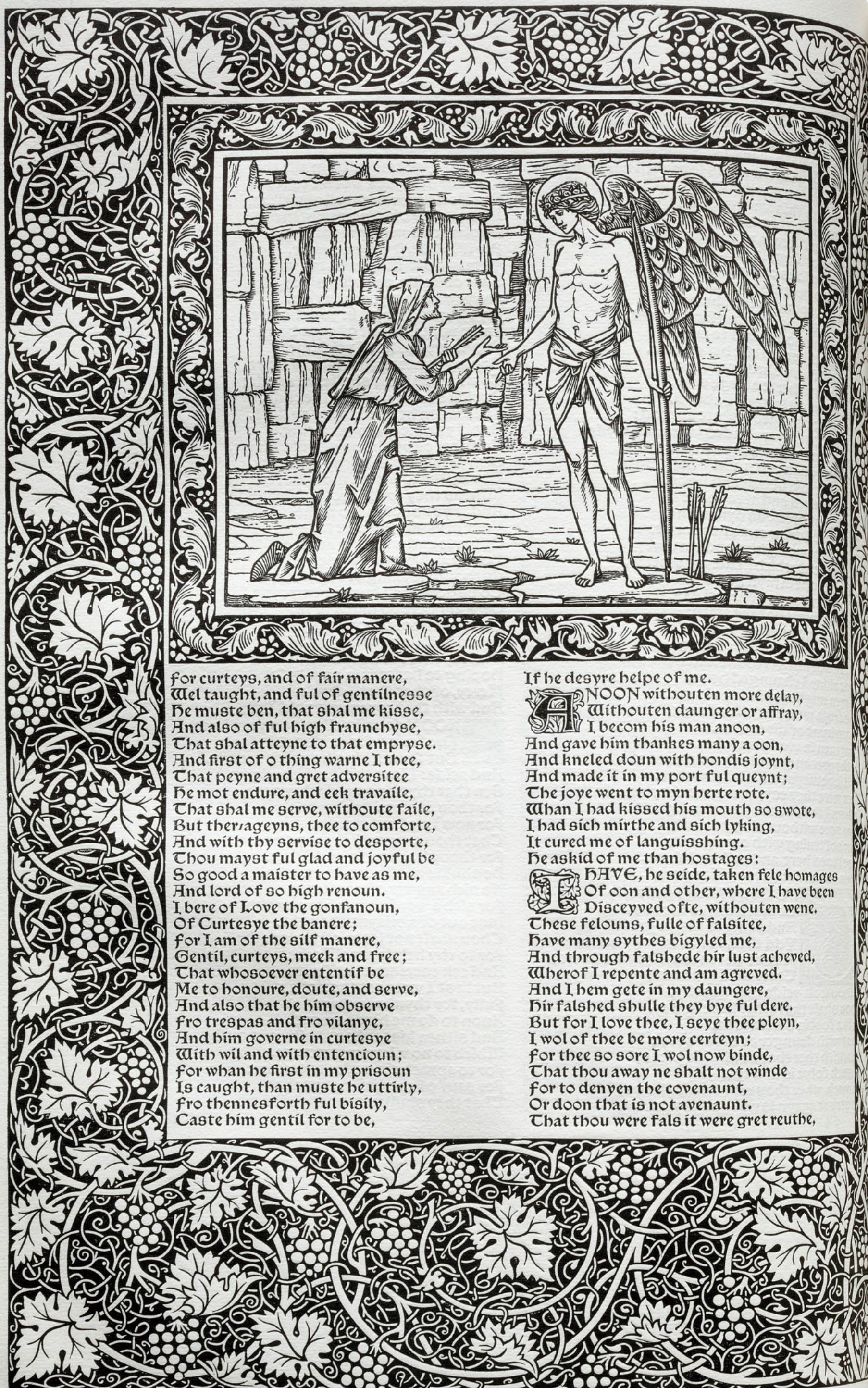




for curteys, and of fair manere,
Wel taught, and ful of gentillesse
He muste ben, that shal me kisse,
And also of ful high fraunchyse,
That shal atteyne to that emprise.
And first of o thing warne I thee,
That payne and gret adversitee
He mot endure, and eek travaile,
That shal me serve, withoute faile,
But therageyns, thee to comforte,
And with thy servise to desporte,
Thou mayst ful glad and joyful be
So good a maister to have as me,
And lord of so high renoun.
I bere of Love the gonfanoun,
Of Curtesye the banere;
for I am of the silf manere,
Gentil, curteys, meek and free;
That whosoever ententif be
Me to honoure, dote, and serve,
And also that he him observe
fro trespas and fro vilanye,
And him governe in curtesye
With wil and with entencioun;
for whan he first in my prisoun
Is caught, than muste he uttirly,
fro thennesforth ful bisily,
Caste him gentil for to be,

If he desyre helpe of me.

ANOON withouten more delay,
Withouten daunger or affray,
I becom his man anon,
And gave him thanks many a oon,
And kneled down with hondis joynit,
And made it in my port ful queynt;
The joye went to myn herte rote.
Whan I had kissed his mouth so swote,
I had sich mirthe and sich tyking,
It cured me of languissching.
He askid of me than hostages:
HAVE, he seide, taken fele homages
Of oon and other, where I have been
Disceyved ofte, withouten wene.
These felouns, fulle of falsitee,
Have many sythes bigyled me,
And through falschede hir lust achieved,
Wherof I repente and am agreved.
And I hem gete in my daungere,
Hir falsched shulle they bye ful dere.
But for I love thee, I seye thee pleyn,
I wol of thee be more certeyn;
for thee so sore I wol now binde,
That thou away ne shalt not winde
for to denyen the covenaut,
Or doon that is not avenaunt.
That thou were fals it were gret reuthe,

Sith thou semest so ful of treuthe.
IRE, if thee list to undirstande,
I mervelle thee asking this demande.
For why or wherfore shulde ye
Ostages or borwis aske of me,
Or any other sikirnesse,
Sith ye wote, in sothfastnesse,
That ye have me surprysed so,
And hool myn herte taken me fro,
That it wol do for me nothing
But if it be at your bidding?
Myn herte is yours, and myn right nought,
As it bihoveth, in dede and thought,
Redy in alle to worche your wille,
Whether so it turne to good or ille.
So sore it lustith you to plesse,
No man therof may you disseise,
Ye have theron set sich justise,
That it is werreyd in many wise.
And if ye doute it nolde obeye,
Ye may therof do make a keye,
And holde it with you for ostage.

WHertis, this is noon outrage,
Quoth Love, and fully I accord;
For of the body he is ful lord
That bath the herte in his tresor;
Outrage it were to asken more.

THAN of his aumener he drough
A litel keye, fetys ynough,
Which was of gold polissched clere,
And seide to me: With this keye here
Thyn herte to me now wol I shette;
for al my jowellis loke and knette
I binde under this litel keye,
That no wight may carye awaye;
This keye is ful of gret poeste.

WTH which anon he touchid me
Andir the syde ful softly,
That he myn herte sodeynly
Without al any had spered,
That yit right nought it hath me dered.
Whan he had doon his wil al out,
And I had put him out of dout,

IRE, I seide, I have right gret wille
Your lust and plesauce to fulfillle.
Loke ye my servise take at gree,
By thilke feith ye owe to me.

I seye nought for recreaundyse,
for I nought doute of your servyse.
But the servaunt traveileth in vayne,
That for to serven doth his payne
Unto that lord, which in no wyse
Can him no thank for his servyse.

LOVE seide: Dismaye thee nought,
Sin thou for succour hast me sought,
In thank thy servise wol I take,
And high of degree I wol thee make,
If wikkidnesse ne hindre thee;
But, as I hope, it shal nought be.
To worship no wight by aventure
May come, but if he payne endure.
Byde and suffre thy distresse;
That hurtith now, it shal be lesse;

I wot mysilf what may thee save,
What medycyne thou woldist have,
And if thy trouthe to me thou kepe,
I shal unto thyn helping eke,
To cure thy woundes and make hem clene,
Wherso they be olde or grene;
Thou shalt be holpen, at wordis fewe,
for certeynly thou shalt wel shewe
Wher that thou servest with good wille,
for to complisschen and fulfillle
My comaundementis, day and night,
Whiche I to lovers yeve of right.
AH, sire, for Goddis love, seide I,
Er ye passe hens, ententifly
Your comaundementis to me ye say,
And I shal kepe hem, if I may;
for hem to kepen is al my thought.
And if so be I wot hem nought,
Than may I sinne unwittingly.
Wherfore I pray you enterly,
With al myn herte, me to lere,
That I trepasse in no manere.

THE god of love than chargid me
Anoon, as ye shal here and see,
Word by word, by right emprise,
So as the Romance shal devyse.
The maister lesith his tyme to lere,
Whan the disciple wol not here.

It is but veyn on him to swinke,
That on his lerning wol not thinke.
Whoso lust love, let him entende,
for now the Romance ginneth amende.

Now is good to here, in fay,
If any be that can it say,
And poynte it as the resoun is
Set; for othergate, ywis,
It shal nought wel in alle thing
Be brought to good undirstonding:
for a rede that poyntith ille
A good sentence may ofte spille.
The book is good at the ending,
Maad of newe and lusty thing;
for whoso wol the ending here,
The crafte of love he shal now lere,
If that he wol so long abyde,
Til I this Romance may unhyde,
And undo the signifaunce
Of this dreame into Romaunce.
The sothfastnesse that now is hid,
Without coverture shal be kid,
Whan I undon have this dreeming,
Wherin no word is of lesing.

ALANY, at the beginning,
I wol, sayd Love, over alle thing,
Thou leve, if thou wolt not be
fals, and trespasse ageyns me.
I curse and blame generally
Alle hem that loven vilany;
for vilany makith vilayn,
And by his dedis a cherle is seyn.
Thise vilayns am without pitee,
frendshipec, love, and al bounte.
I nil receyve to my servyse

The
Romaunt
of the
Rose